

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 SAM-01 /067 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8071

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2424

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR TU

SUBJ: TURKISH AIRPLANES IN GREEK AIR SPACE

MIL ADDEES ALSO FOR POLAD

1. DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE
LAST NIGHT TO DISCUSS REPORTS OF RENEWED TURKISH AIRCRAFT
FLIGHTS OVER GREEK ISLANDS IN THE EASTERN AEGEAN.

2. AVEROFF SAID HE WAS NOT REQUESTING THAT THE USG TAKE
ANY ACTION BUT SIMPLY WANTED TO KEEP US INFORMED OF
THESE DEVELOPMENTS AS HE AND HIS MINISTRY HAD DONE DURING
EARLIER REPORTED INCIDENTS ABOUT A WEEK AGO.

3. AVEROFF SAID THAT FOUR ADDITIONAL TURKISH AIRCRAFT
FLIGHTS OVER GREEK ISLAND AIR SPACE HAD OCCURRED DURING
AFTERNOON MARCH 27. TWO WERE OVER THE ISLAND OF KHIOS,
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ONE OVER MITTILINI (LESVOS) AND ONE OVER SAMOS. THE

PLANES WERE ESTIMATED TO BE FLYING AT AN ALTITUDE OF 12 TO 14 THOUSAND FEET. IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS INSTRUCTIONS, AVEROFF SAID, GREEK PERSONNEL ON THE ISLANDS FIRED ON THE AIRCRAFT WITH 40 MM AUTOMATIC WEAPONS (PRESUMABLY--IN VIEW OF MY UNDERSTANDING OF INEFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH WEAPONS AT SUCH RANGE, PURELY FOR SYMBOLIC REASONS). AVEROFF SAID THAT GREEK INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT WERE ALSO ORDERED ALOFT FROM LIMOS BUT ON ARRIVAL AT THE SCENE FOUND THAT THE TURKISH AIRCRAFT HAD DEPARTED.

4. AVEROFF SAID THAT DETAILS CONCERNING THESE UNAUTHORIZED OVERFLIGHTS WERE BEING TRANSMITTED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN ORDER THAT A FURTHER PROTEST COULD BE LODGED WITH THE GOT IN ANKARA. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, AVEROFF SAID HE THOUGHT THE TURKS WERE PROBABLY "TESTING" GREECE TO SEE WHAT THE GREEK RESPONSE WOULD BE AND THAT IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE GOG HAD AUTHORIZED THE FIRING AT THE TURKISH PLANES AND THE GREEK INTERCEPTOR MISSIONS. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT AVEROFF AND THE GOG DID NOT ACTUALLY INTEND TO HARM THE TURKISH AIRCRAFT BUT SIMPLY TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF THE GREEK RESPONSE AS A FURTHER WARNING TO THE TURKS.

5. AVEROFF SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER IN DETAIL WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, WHO CONCURRED IN AVEROFF'S HANDLING OF THE MATTER, AND THAT A STATEMENT WOULD BE MADE TO THE PRESS LATER IN THE EVENING. ACCORDING TO THE GREEK RADIO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS MADE BY THE GOG MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AT 11 PM LOCAL TIME THURSDAY NIGHT MARCH 27:

QTE BETWEEN 1200 AND 1800 ON 27 MARCH, ISOLATED TURKISH AIRPLANES FLYING AT A RELATIVELY HIGH ALTITUDE VIOLATED FOR A FEW MINUTES THE NATIONAL AIR SPACE OVER ISLANDS OF THE ARCHIPELAGOS. THE TURKISH PLANES LEFT EASTWARDS AS SOON AS THE ISLANDS WERE APPROACHED BY SEVERAL OF OUR FIGHTER PLANES WHICH TOOK OFF IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO INTERCEPT THE TURKISH PLANES. DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE VIOLATIONS OF THE NATIONAL AIR SPACE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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IMMEDIATELY PUT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN ORDER THAT IT MAY PROCEED WITH THE NECESSARY DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS. UNQTE KUBISCH

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